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WELSH PROVERBS.

Plant gwirionedd yu hen Diarebion.—DIAREB.

THE first volume of this work* contained a brief account of the Proverbs of the Cymry, as preserved in the Archæology of Wales, together with some specimens of this species of aphoristic lore †. We now select a few more, not so much for any pre-eminent merit they possess, as because they all appear to have some reference to matters of history; and, as, in many instances, the true meaning of the allusion is now entirely lost, and, as, in others, where known, it has obvious reference to very remote periods, the proverbs themselves may reasonably be regarded as being generally of high antiquity as well as being purely national. For this reason, we are disposed to believe, that their insertion here will not be uninteresting, even although one or two have appeared on former occasions.

HISTORICAL PROVERBS.

What is gotten on the horse of Malen will go under his belly †.

Like the coat of Caradawg §.

Gwenhwyvar, the daughter of Ogyrvan Gawr, bad when little, worse when big ||.

To be as repentant as the man, that had killed his greyhound.

To devote a slave to the destroying power **.

Though he may be good, yet is he not Mordav ††.

* Page 130.

† Pages 207, 295, 365.

‡ See CAMBRO-BRITON, vol. i. p. 125, Triad xvi. and p. 206 in the notes.

§ Id. pp. 169, 203, 204.

|| She was daughter of Gwryd Gwent and one of the wives of Arthur.

** It is stated by Mr. Lewis Morris, in one of his papers, that, in the memory of old people, a custom of throwing one of a herd of cattle down a rock, in order to free the rest from any distemper, was common in Brecknockshire, and perhaps in the neighbourhood of Buallt, which (one would almost think) must have derived its name from such a practice, as its component syllables, BU and ALLT, may be translated OX-CLIFF. Somewhat similar to this was the ancient custom prevalent in the Isle of Cyprus, where shipwrecked strangers, who laid their hands on the altar of Apollo, were cast down the precipice whereon it stood.

†† See CAMBRO-BRITON, vol. i. p. 249.

As bad as the Mad Velen*.
 Long the sleep of Maelgwn in the church of Rhos †.
 Malaen deserves his journey †.
 Like the work of Emrys §.
 Like the load of the stone of Ceti ||.
 Like the flour compared with Indeg **.
 Arthur was but while he was.
 Two Welshmen will not continue in concord.
 Arthur did not violate the protection of a woman.
 A Welshman will not keep until he loses.
 It was not at once that Herbin was obtained ††.
 Old Cyrys only asked for the fractions between the
 changes ††.
 The word of a foreigner is not imperative on a Cymro.
 No one is like Nest §§.
 The gift of the men of Erging ||||.
 As generous as Nudd ***.
 Daily often comes like the idiots of Cyveiliog †††.
 Talking as much as the son of Saith Gudyn †††.
 Talking with Merddin on a pole §§§.
 As cunning as Ieuan Cydwain.
 The ale of Aberconwy the farther off the better.
 To go a begging in Gwyddelwern || || ||.
 To kill the Mayor of Chester on Cevn Cerwyni ****.
 He, that is the head, should become the bridge ††††.

* The Yellow Plague of Rhos, p. 126 † Ibid ‡ Id. p. 125
 § Vol. ii. p. 387, Triad lxxxix. || Ibid.

** The daughter of Avarwy Hir, and one of Arthur's favourites. Archæol. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 8.

†† The history of Herbin is not known.

‡‡ Cyrys, generally called Old Cyrys of Ial, lived in the eleventh century, and was the original collector of the Proverbs published in the Archæology.

§§ A beauty of the twelfth century, celebrated by the princely bards, Owain Cyveiliog and Hywel ab Owain Gwynedd

|||| A district in Herefordshire.

*** See CAMBRO-BRITON, vol. i. p. 249.

††† A part of Montgomeryshire.

††† This name occurs in the ancient bards, but the allusion in the proverb is not known. §§§ The reason of this allusion is also lost.

||||| A parish in Meirion, near Corwen.

**** This name is also to be found in the old bards; but no more is known of the event here alluded to.

†††† See CAMBRO-BRITON, vol. i. p. 207 in the Notes.